

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending. No new matter has been presented.

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 14-16 and 19 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dawson, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0234953, in view of Nara, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0017620. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites “a search controller which executes searching of shared folders in which image data are stored, shared by a plurality of information processing apparatuses connected to a network.” The Examiner asserts that Dawson teaches this feature at paragraph [0008]. Applicants note that this portion of Dawson relates to a discussion of a prior art method of allowing a user to view pictures that another user has designated for sharing by searching that person’s computer.

The Examiner then asserts that the claimed feature of “a memory unit which stores results of searching of said shared folders” is taught by Dawson at paragraph [0090]. This embodiment of Dawson’s invention does not relate to the same prior art method discussed in paragraph [0008]. Applicants submit that it is not possible for the memory disclosed in Dawson, which relates to an embodiment of Dawson’s invention, to store results of a search that takes place in a prior art method. The Examiner must show that the searching of shared folders in which image data are stored is searched and that these search results are shared. The Examiner has failed to point out where that combination of features is taught in Dawson.

The Examiner then asserts that Dawson teaches the claimed feature of “a comparator which compares shared folders of the present search with those of the last search.” The Examiner asserts that if the found set is not confirmed by the user, an alternative method (step 72) is automatically initiated on behalf of the user to find appropriate images to share. The Examiner asserts that each found set is displayed again in step 68 and the cycle of searching and confirming repeats until the desired set of images has been designated. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is taking an overly broad view of what is taught in Dawson.

Dawson discloses a method of searching for images, and each time a search is performed, the user confirms whether the images matches the images sought to be retrieved. Searches and confirmations are repeated until the desired images are retrieved. Dawson is not comparing shared folders of the present search with those of the last search. Dawson is not even comparing retrieved images of the present search with those of the last search. In fact, it does not appear that Dawson is comparing anything at all.

For at least these reasons, Dawson fails to teach or suggest that which the Examiner asserts. Nara fails to overcome the deficiencies of Dawson. Accordingly, applicant submits that the features of claims 1, 6, 14 and 19 are not taught or suggested by Dawson, Nara nor a combination thereof. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4-5, 9-13, 17-18 and 20-22 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dawson, in view of Nara as applied to claims 1-3, 6-8, 14-16 and 19 above, and further in view of Tamura, U.S. Patent No. 7,027,427. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

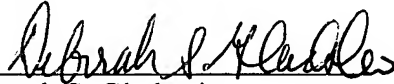
These claims are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies and further in view of Tamura's failure to overcome the deficiencies of Dawson and Nara. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and

authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772035900.

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